We claim:

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1. A method for translating a source language classification system into at least one target language, wherein said classification system classifies a communication into one of a plurality of predefined categories, comprising:

obtaining a sample response repository in said source language, wherein said sample response repository comprises a plurality of prior communications each having a classification;

applying a mechanical translation process to said sample response repository to generate a translated response repository; and

processing said translated response repository to generate a natural language understanding module that can classify a communication in said target language.

- 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a statistical method.
 - 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a rule-base.
- 20 4. The method of claim 3, wherein said rule-base defines one or more classification rules that determine how communications are classified.
 - 5. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of applying a mechanical translation process to said rule-base to generate a rule-base in said target language.

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6. The method of claim 1, wherein said communication is a spoken utterance and wherein said method further comprises the step of applying a speech recognition statistical model compilation process to the translated target language response repository to generate a speech recognition module in the target language.

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- 7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of applying a speech recognizer to said spoken utterance to convert said spoken utterance to text.
- 8. The method of claim 1, wherein said classification system routes said communication to one of a plurality of predefined destinations.
 - 9. The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of predefined categories are a plurality of subject areas.
- 10. An apparatus for translating a source language classification system into at least one target language, wherein said classification system classifies an utterance into one of a plurality of predefined categories, comprising:

a memory; and

at least one processor, coupled to the memory, operative to:

obtain a sample response repository in said source language, wherein said sample response repository comprises a plurality of prior communications each having a classification;

apply a mechanical translation process to said sample response repository to generate a translated response repository; and

processing said translated response repository to generate a natural language understanding module that can classify a communication in said target language.

- 11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a statistical method.
- The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said natural language understanding process employs a rule-base.
 - 13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said rule-base defines one or more classification rules that determine how communications are classified.

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- 14. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising the step of applying a mechanical translation process to said rule-base to generate a rule-base in said target language.
- 15. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said communication is a spoken utterance and wherein said processor is further configured to apply a speech recognition statistical model compilation process to the translated target language response repository to generate a speech recognition module in the target language.
- 16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said processor is further configured to apply a speech recognizer to said spoken utterance to convert said spoken utterance to text.
 - 17. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said classification system routes said communication to one of a plurality of predefined destinations.
- 15 18. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said plurality of predefined categories are a plurality of subject areas.
 - 19. An article of manufacture for translating a source language classification system into at least one target language, wherein said classification system classifies an utterance into one of a plurality of predefined categories, comprising a machine readable medium containing one or more programs which when executed implement the steps of:

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obtain a sample response repository in said source language, wherein said sample response repository comprises a plurality of prior communications each having a classification;

apply a mechanical translation process to said sample response repository to generate a translated response repository; and

process said translated response repository to generate a natural language understanding module that can classify a communication in said target language.

20. The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein said classification system routes said communication to one of a plurality of predefined destinations.

21. The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein said plurality of predefined categories are a plurality of subject areas.